

# CLUTTON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

## Annual Report

OF THE

## MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st, 1908.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit my Annual Report.

The **Death rate** is 12.4 per 1000, a decrease on last year which was 13.4.

The **Birth rate** is 27.2 per 1000, a decrease on last year which was 29.8.

**Zymotic Mortality** was .35 per 1000, a decrease on last year which was 1.14.

**Infant Mortality** was 66.4 per 1000, a decrease on last year which was 78.8.

These figures are very satisfactory, and compare favourably with the Statistics for Rural England and Wales, which I give below.

Vital Statistics of Rural England and Wales.

Death rate 14.7. Birth rate 26.2

Zymotic Death rate, 0.99. Infant Mortality, 110.

The **General Health** of the District has been exceptionally good.

**Infectious Disease** has been very little.

One **School**, Farrington Gurney, was closed for a month from 25th March, for Measles.

### Births.

Total number, 452. Ratio per 1000, 27.2.

No. 1 District—Camerton, Farrington Gurney, Ston Easton and Chilcompton	...	92
No. 2 District—Paulton, Chelwood, High Littleton, Timsbury and Farmborough	...	181
No. 3 District—Chew Magna, Chew Stoke, Stowey, Norton Malreward, Stanton		
Drew and Publow	... ..	74
No. 4 District—Hinton Blewitt, East and West Harptree, Compton Martin,		
Clutton, Ubley, Nempnett, Widcombe, Litton	... ..	105

### Deaths.

Total number registered in the District, 206. Ratio per 1000, 12.4.

No. 1 District, 42.

No. 3 District, 40.

No. 2 District, 65.

No. 4 District, 59.





## **ZYMOTIC MORTALITY.**

Calculated on the 7 principal diseases.

Scarlet Fever, Whooping Cough, Small-pox, Measles, Continued  
Fever, Diarrhœa, Diphtheria.

Diphtheria, 1.      Diarrhœa, 5.

The Death rate being .35.

## **INFANTILE MORTALITY.**

Of 452 children born alive, 30 died under 1 year old. Mortality, 66.4.

POPULATION—Census 1901, 16,599. I consider the population is almost stationary so I have based my calculations on the result of the last Census.

PHYSICAL FEATURES AND GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE DISTRICT—Very undulating, chiefly limestone formation—well wooded and watered, and fertile.

CLIMATE—Rather damp—no severe winters for many years.

OCCUPATION—Coal-mining and Agricultural (chiefly Dairy-farming). Iron-ore products are manufactured at Littleton. Boots are made in fair numbers at Paulton. Employment is plentiful, and extreme poverty in my experience is rare.

HOUSE TO HOUSE VISITATION.—has been continued by the Inspector who has sent me Reports on 5 Parishes during the year.

A considerable number of Defects were found and steps taken to remedy them. (See detailed Report).

I do not consider enough ground is covered in this direction in the time, but the Inspector informs me that he is so fully occupied that he is unable to do more. As I have pointed out many times systematic inspection and re-inspection is practically the only means at my disposal to keep matters fairly satisfactory in the District. I have myself visited 14 Parishes, and systematically enquired into the chief matters affecting the Public Health. (details accompany this).

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES—No action has been taken —accommodation is not good, nor sufficient—a fair number of new houses have been built in certain parts—their erection requires more supervision.

DAIRIES AND COW SHEDS.—The Register has been kept up to date, all premises have been inspected, and every effort has been made to improve matters. Defects, where found, have been pointed out, and abatement of nuisances obtained. Milk supplied from the District is said to be particularly good and pure.

## **WATER SUPPLY.**

The Council has completed the scheme for supplying 8 Parishes with good water from Downside. The system is working satisfactorily. They have also decided to supply Chew Magna. The matter is now in the hands of the Engineer for Report as to available sources, and I believe a pure supply is assured in the near future.



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Stowey and East Harptree are well supplied by private land-owners. Bishop Sutton is insufficiently supplied, through private enterprise, from Bristol Water Works mains. The rest of the District is supplied by wells, mostly shallow wells, liable to pollution and apt to run dry in summer.

### **DRAINAGE.**

Nothing has been done in the year. Many of the larger centres, e.g.—Timsbury, Paulton, Farrington Gurney, Clutton and Temple Cloud, Chew Magna, High Littleton, etc. are in a very bad state and need attention. There is no proper system of drainage in the district with the exception of Compton Martin, Ubley and Nempnett, where there are good pipe drains leading to filter beds with septic tanks ; these were put in a few years ago by the Bristol Water Works, and so far as I know answer well.

In nearly all the villages old stone-built culverts, originally meant for storm-water have become receptacles for house-drainage, to a greater or lesser extent, and lead directly into the streams, thus contravening the Public Health Act. In some places, I will instance Paulton, this has produced an intolerable state of affairs, and where they are supplied with water I recommend early attention to proper drainage. I do not consider it has been possible hitherto. Sewage disposal is mainly by privies, many very insanitary. There are some W.C's leading to Cess-pits, the latter often ill-constructed. We have been gradually substituting pail-closets for the old privies, but they need more attention than we can give them in order to get the people to keep them clean.

Covered Ash-pits are practically non-existent. I recommend the Council to compel every householder to provide such at once ; their absence is distinctly contrary to law, and is a fruitful source of mischief.

### **TUBERCULOSIS.**

The new order of L.G.B. has been received and forms of Certificate have been issued to the Local Medical Men.

A Register will be kept, and steps taken to give information as to the possible course that can be adopted towards the amelioration and prevention of the Disease.

Hitherto there has been no system of notification, but I informed all the medical men that premises would be carefully disinfected after death, and that help and direction would be given at their request in any case voluntarily notified. I have never had a case so notified, but I have had many premises disinfected. There is no Public Hospital in the District for this complaint.

No cases of Tubercular milk or meat have been discovered during the year. Premises and slaughter-houses are in fairly good condition and are kept clean and lime-washed.





### **MID-WIVES ACT.**

This is administered by the County Council, who employ an Inspectress. There are very few certified Mid-wives, but many uncertified women still practice their calling. No steps have been taken for the payment of Medical Men called in by certified Mid-wives.

### **NOTIFICATION OF BIRTHS ACT.**

No steps have been taken.

### **ANTHRAX AND GLANDERS.**

The Council have not decided to add these to the compulsorily notifiable Diseases.

### **BYE-LAWS**

Have not yet been adopted. No supervision over the erection of new houses is exercised beyond the provision of a supply of water that satisfies the Council. I consider that the early adoption of bye-laws—SUITABLE TO THE DISTRICT—is an absolute necessity. Many new houses have been built during the last few years and in many instances are not all that could be desired, but we are powerless to alter matters at present. Pigs and Poultry are often kept in unsuitable places and too close to the dwelling-houses.

### **SCHOOLS**

Are nearly all good and new Buildings, with, so far as I can judge, sufficient accommodation. Sanitary arrangements and water supply are the best that can be arranged. All cases of notifiable diseases are at once reported to the Head-teachers. Possible carriers of Disease are carefully excluded for the necessary time, and School closure avoided if possible.

School Inspection is not under the control of the Council, but very cordial relations exist between the Chief Inspector and myself—information is freely inter-changed, and entire co-operation assured.

### **UNDER-GROUND BAKE-HOUSES.**

None.

### **LICENSED LODGING-HOUSES.**

None.

### **INFECTIOUS DISEASE.**

There is no Hospital. Every case is visited repeatedly and supplied with disinfectants, but it is very difficult in many cases to get Parents to isolate infected children, and in some cases it is impossible for them to do so. It is no uncommon thing for me to find a child suffering from say Diphtheria, lying in a living room with half a dozen other children all around, and meals cooked and eaten in the same room.

A small Hospital is badly needed.





## EXISTING NUISANCES REMAINING UNABATED.

FARMBOROUGH—Drainage into the Brook. No action.

HOBBS WALL—Absence of Drains and resulting unbearable smells in hot weather. No action.

PEASEDOWN—Defective Drainage. No action, special Report sent in.

## FACTORY, WORKSHOPS, AND OUT WORKERS' PREMISES

Have been regularly visited and inspected. They have on the whole been found satisfactory. No important defects have been discovered. Particular attention is paid to Lime-washing and ventilation. No cases of over crowding have been discovered. Registers are kept and a detailed Report sent to the Home Office. The prescribed Forms for Out-workers are supplied by the Council.

## PREVALENCE OF DISEASE.

Under the Notification of Diseases Act, 42 cases came under my notice during the year. The smallest number for many years. They were all particularly mild and there was only one death—a case of Diphtheria.

Diphtheria, 18. Erysipelas, 10. Scarlet Fever, 10. Enteric Fever, 2. Puerperal Fever, 2.

**Diphtheria.**—Of the total number, 9 were in one family at Stanton Wick, with one death.

I was unable to trace the source. The conditions were so particularly filthy due to over-crowding, and intemperance, that Disease had every opportunity of developing. The other cases were spread over the District. They were slight, and do not call for comment.

**Erysipelas** was of the usual sporadic type, slight, and not requiring serious attention.

**Scarlet Fever.**—All cases very mild.

**Puerperal Fever.**—Both cases were attended by women, I believe, uncertified, they were mild and both recovered.

The women were warned against working until dis-infected.

**Phthisis.**—Nine deaths occurred. 2 of them at Nordrach—a private open-air sanatorium taking in patients from outside the District. There is not much consumption here, though there is a slight increase this year.

**Cancer.**—12 deaths. This disease seems prevalent and on the increase, certain parts are hardly ever free from a Case or two. I can offer no explanation.

**Bronchitis.**—25 deaths. 13 over 65.

**Pneumonia.**—14 deaths. 5 over 65 years.

**Heart Disease.**—23 deaths, 15 over 65 years.



### **PARISHES INSPECTED BY MYSELF DURING THE YEAR.**

Chew Magna, Chew Stoke, Nempnett, Ubley, Compton Martin, E. and W. Harptree, Widcombe, Bishop Sutton, Stowey, Stanton Drew, Norton Malreward, Publow and Chelwood.

All these villages have certain common defects. The houses are old. There is little new building. Accommodation in many instances not sufficient, though there is seldom real over-crowding. There is the usual want in old houses of fire-places in bedrooms and proper ventilation. Water, with three exceptions, is from shallow wells, mostly private property, liable to pollution and shortage. There is an entire absence of covered Ash-pits and a want of cleanliness with regard to privies, which are the usual receptacles for excrement. Drains are often absent, or defective, but in spite of these, the inhabitants are healthy above the average; they make few complaints, and I am of opinion that though in no way perfect, the conditions are quite up to the average of similar districts throughout the country. We make every effort to maintain cleanliness and to correct the grosser defects. The Council are quite alive to their responsibilities; they must for financial reasons, go slow, they have already borrowed large sums for public health purposes, and the district is not able to bear a very heavy monetary burden. I have no doubt, as time goes on, steady improvement will be maintained. I think, as facilities are provided, they will have to consider a more efficient disposal of sewage in the larger villages than at present exists.

Drainage at Chew Magna is particularly bad, but I do not see how it can be improved until there is a water supply.

### **INSPECTOR OF NUISANCES.**

Appointment remains as before. One whole-time man, not enough strength to cope with the numerous new duties imposed by the L.G.B.

Yours obediently,

**R. H. BREW.**



